

3. RUE BÉNOUVILLE . XVI:

August 5. 1978.

Dear Brian, dear Wayne,

Your gracious letter of July 1st meant all the more to me because it was written on my birthday. What a perfect gift.

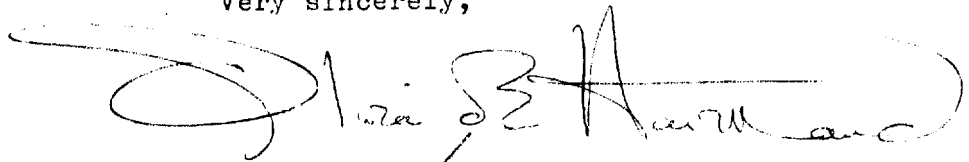
I shall never really be able to assess the remarkable experience you made available to me during those astonishing three days in Owensboro.

Sharing the thoughts, feelings, views, of such a variety of gifted persons of great responsibility and accomplishment was the grandest of privileges - but to do so in the company of so many unusually talented young people is what gave everything a unique dimension, a special depth and meaning.

I am so glad you had the impossible dream, that you have made it a reality, and that you let me live it with you.

Most gratefully, and with warmest regards and good wishes to you and all the members of your clan,

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Olivia de Havilland', with a large, sweeping flourish extending from the end of the name.

Olivia de Havilland.

PS: Thank you for asking me to join the Council - I am very honored to be a member, and I eagerly look forward to seeing you again next June.



VALERIE JEAN WILLIAMSON

"Student Leader of the Year"—Redlands Senior High School  
Redlands, California

SPONSOR: Redlands Mall  
and Pahn Property Management Corporation

July 6, 1978

Dear Mr. Reynolds,

My deepest thanks are extended to you, your sons, and the American Academy of Achievement for making possible my fabulous four-day stay in Kentucky! All of my expectations were surpassed! Your superb planning, the lovely accommodations and delicious meals, the friendly Academy people, and the exquisite banquet decorations contributed greatly toward a perfect weekend.

I wish to assure you that the Academy's objective, inspiration to youth, was achieved! Meeting and listening to the "Greats" in their diversified fields of endeavor was a thrilling experience. The fascinating success stories of the Golden Plate Awardees and the sharing of their experiences, advice, and wisdom was exhilarating. All of the Awardees seemed to share the special traits of concern for others, determination to achieve their goals, and humbleness, despite renown and acclaim.

Meeting and mingling with so many "Greats" at one time was an almost over-whelming experience! The weekend flew by far too quickly for me to absorb the significance of how each personality has touched and affected our lives. Now that I have returned to reality, I am even better able to appreciate the privilege of having met so many wonderful people--the Awardees, the patrons, and the other students.

Each time I relate or recall whom I met and heard in Kentucky, my enthusiasm is rekindled. I will cherish the memories of that weekend all of my life. The beautiful Banquet yearbook, autographs, and personal photographs will enable me always to recall vividly my wonderful experience.

Thanks to your dream, many students have been aroused to higher aspirations and goals. The "Greats" challenged me to set high goals and to pursue them, despite adversities. Each time I become discouraged, I will recall the provoking messages and will push on with renewed enthusiasm and vigor.

Thank you again for a splendid and special experience!

Sincerely,

Valerie Jean Williamson

RECEIVED  
JUL 10 1978  
R E



VALERIE JEAN WILLIAMSON

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Redlands, California

SPONSOR: *Redlands Mall*  
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Sincerely,

*Valerie Jean Williamson*

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TERESA CURRAN

"Student Leader of the Year"—Heritage High School  
Littleton, Colorado

SPONSOR: *Samsonite Corporation*  
*division of Beatrice Foods Company*

Dear Mr. Reynolds:

This last weekend was the most meaningful and exciting experience of my life! I am still in the process of digesting all that I have seen and heard. The people were fantastic! Not only the celebrities were fascinating, but the other students were interesting and fun! The dances were great. I felt like a real honored guest...

The weekend did its job!! I feel very inspired and confident towards my present and long-range goals. Many, many, many thanks.

*Teresa Curran*

### JAMES FOTI

USA Champion, National Production Executive Contest—Junior Achievement  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

SPONSOR: *Reader's Digest Speakers' Corps*  
*and Junior Achievement, Inc.*



July 3, 1978

Dear Mr. Reynolds:

With no idea of what was about to take place, I walked into the Executive Inn Rivermont's ballroom Saturday night with my eyes wide open, like a small awe-stricken child after discovering a new and fascinating event of life.

The Banquet of the Golden Plate Weekend was indeed the most fascinating, fun-filled, and stimulating four days I have encountered so far in my life. I will always retain the memories and feelings of meeting and talking with some of the most successful personalities in all fields of endeavor.

Being among my peers, as "America's Young Captains of Achievement," gave me a great sense of accomplishment and inspiration to set my goals higher in hopes for the greater achievements I've witnessed at this "gathering of the greats."

*Jim Foti*

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DAVID CAREY HEAD

Outstanding Career Education Student—Owensboro High School  
Owensboro, Kentucky

SPONSOR: W. M. Elmer • Texas Gas Transmission Corporation



Dear Mr. Reynolds:

There comes a time in every human life when words cannot sufficiently describe one's emotions. As I reflect on my recent experiences at the American Academy of Achievement, I find myself in such a predicament...

The world's most brilliant minds in justice, science, and industry opened their vast storehouses of knowledge to a group of young people who eagerly anticipated every word. We were not disappointed. Where else could an aspiring law student discuss court reform with Louis Nizer, Judge John Sirica, and Clark Clifford?

The most impressive speaker of the entire weekend was Olivia de Havilland. The sheer magnetism of her voice held every person in a trance-like state until she finished. Even in casual conversations, she displayed a personal interest toward each student. That warmth was another factor that contributed to the Academy's success...

Sincerely,

*David C. Head*



DIANE JOYCE SIEGEL

USA "Presidential Scholar"  
Stamford, Connecticut

SPONSOR: Edwin C. Whitehead

Dear Mr. Reynolds:

I could never thank you enough for the marvelous weekend of the Banquet of the Golden Plate... it was like stepping into a dream world for three days. I cherish many memories of sitting spellbound listening to some of the most accomplished and distinguished people in the world. It's still hard to believe that I shared the experience with Nobel Prize winners, television stars, and Pulitzer Prize winners, all real people who seemed genuinely interested in us. Never before had I even imagined such a gathering of achievers from so many diverse fields, with me in attendance too!

Imagine my thrill when I stepped onto the elevator to find myself chatting with Judge John Sirica, or when I sat down to lunch with Tom Landry and Olivia de Havilland. I was deeply impressed by the devotion and sincerity of the honorees, and there is no doubt that they succeeded in inspiring us as the Academy intended...

I will never forget the weekend of the Banquet: not because of the beautiful hotel and lavish dinners (although I did appreciate those benefits), but primarily because of the spirited warmth of the people there. Thank you for introducing me to the exciting world of the Banquet and enriching my life.

Sincerely,

*Diane Joyce Siegel*

REBECCA JOHNSON

USA "Youth Citizenship" Champion—Soroptimist Foundations  
Belmont, California

SPONSOR: *Harry Merlo • Louisiana-Pacific Corporation*

July 10, 1978



Dear Mr. Merlo:

I just wanted to tell you how grateful I am to you and the Louisiana-Pacific Corporation for sponsoring my trip to Kentucky. The "Salute to Excellence" weekend was a sensational experience. Seeing and listening to so many renowned members of society was very inspiring...

I have very high aspirations for myself and the Academy has taught me that success does not always come fast and easy. The Golden Eagle Award is certainly the first step as a "Promise for Success"...

Again, thank you for caring and giving so much of yourself to make this world a better place to live. Thank you for having faith in young people, faith in me, and faith in the future. I wish you continued success, happiness, and love.

*Becky Johnson*



DOUGLAS C. ADAIR

State Champion Orator—The American Legion  
Birmingham, Alabama

SPONSOR: *The Reader's Digest and  
The American Legion, Department of Alabama*

Dear Mr. Reynolds:

The American Academy of Achievement's 17th annual "Gathering of the Greats" was, without a doubt, one of the greatest experiences of my life. To be able to step outside my hotel room and chat with Olivia De Havilland, Dr. William Kolff, Admiral Stansfield Turner, Tom Landry, Erma Bombeck, and all the others was incredible. The personalities present at the gathering, as well as the "youth achievers" my own age, were truly of the highest caliber.

I walked away from each symposium more inspired than I had been at the preceeding one. In listening to the honored guest's stories of how they achieved their monumental success, often in the face of great adversity, I learned that the youth of today can accomplish anything if we will only set our goals and work hard enough to achieve them.

*Doug Adair*



KATHLEEN MARIE BENKERT

State Champion—VFW "Voice of Democracy" Competition  
Monroe, Wisconsin

SPONSOR: *Department of Wisconsin, Veterans of Foreign Wars  
and Ladies Auxiliary*

July 2, 1978

Dear Mr. Reynolds,

A week has past, yet I am still finding it difficult to keep my mind off the events of last weekend at the American Academy of Achievement. It is also going to be difficult to limit my use of adjectives to describe the Academy--wonderful, marvelous, entertaining, stimulating, informative, fun, encouraging, super--they all fit what I have labeled "The Academy Experience".

I have come away from the Academy with so many fond memories and experiences that I want to share with my friends and family. Shortly they'll all be tired of hearing me say, "When I was in Kentucky...." But at present, most of them are still amazed at my experiences and utter such phrases as, "You mean you really met Debby Boone, Steve Cauthen, Stansfield Turner, Cloris Leachman, Erma Bombeck, William Webster, etc.."

I think what impressed me the most about the Academy was realizing that these "greats" are just as human as I am, not the god-like creatures we sometimes think of them as. I know that when things get rough at college next year, I'll think of Judge John Sirica and how he dropped out of law school twice. And the simple messages from Dorothy Kelly and Tony Auth--be disciplined and don't become seduced by success--will always be there in the back of my mind as I continue to live my life. In fact, each of the honorees had some very important words of wisdom for us...

And what can be said about the Banquet of the Golden Plate that hasn't already been said a hundred times? It was incredible, simply incredible. I had heard and read so much about the Academy weekend and the Golden Plate Banquet that I wondered if it was all too good to be true. But the actual event surpassed even my greatest expectations.

I'd like to come back to the Academy some day--as an honoree. I hope that I will be able to go out and do the best that I can and that my best will be good enough to affect the future, the way these "greats" already have...

Sincerely,

*Kath Benkert*

DALE ROGERS SMITH

"Boy of the Year"—Elks Club Youth Leadership Contest  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

SPONSOR: *Hulsey S. Lokey • Host International, Inc.*



July 5, 1978

Dear Mr. Lokey,

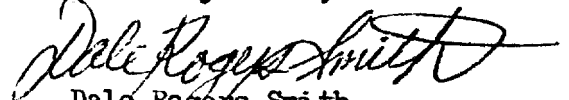
During the past week, I have tried to fully comprehend all of the fabulous things that occurred during that wonderful weekend's "gathering of the greats." I find myself in total awe of the entire trip. Even as I type this letter, I find it hard to believe the people I have met, the places I have seen, and the program of which I was a part.

Upon my return to Milwaukee, I had the chance to speak with many of my friends about the four-day salute in Owensboro. To this day, they remain as in awe of my experience as I am. It is most assuredly an unusual experience when a high school graduate from Wisconsin like myself can relate about his breakfast with Mr. & Mrs. Lowell Thomas and Judge John Sirica, or his dinner of Kentucky Fried Chicken (served under the guidance of Col. Harlen Sanders, of course!) shared with the likes of Ed Asner, Cloris Leachman, and Debbie Boone. Discussions with Olivia de Havilland concerning Shakespeare and acting in general, a question and answer period with Col. Ulrich Wegner concerning terrorism, exchanging pleasantries with Collen McCollough, Helen Hayes, Dorothy Kelly, Stansfield Turner—the list never ends!

As much as I pride myself on my ability to express my true feelings, I find mere words falling hopelessly short when I attempt to express my thanks to you and Host International for sponsoring me. None of this would have been possible without your generosity and unselfish nature. It was indeed an honor to meet you, sir, and an even greater honor to receive my Golden Eagle award from someone as accomplished as yourself. That award now hangs in the kitchen of my home in Milwaukee for all to see. Imagine the stories it could tell if it could only speak!

I will always remember this day as the day that I committed myself to a great goal. I so enjoyed the Academy of Achievement's "gathering of the greats" that I vow to again appear at the Banquet, this time as an honoree. I do this to once again be a part of the most fabulous weekend in my life, and to perhaps inspire one such as myself to achieve as you and all of the other "greats" have time and again.

Sincerely Yours,



Dale Rogers Smith





SHEILA MARY FORAN

State Champion—VFW "Voice of Democracy" Competition  
Prospect Heights, Illinois

SPONSOR: *Department of Illinois, Veterans of Foreign Wars*

June 27, 1978

Dear Reynolds Family,

I still can't believe it. Did I really sit next to Steve Cauthen, winner of the Triple Crown, at dinner last Friday night?

Was I really discussing the CIA with Admiral Stansfield Turner, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, after informing him that he was the subject of my term paper?

Did I really take Erma Bombeck, famed humor columnist, out to breakfast with some of my friends Sunday morning?

Could I have discussed my interpretations of the characters in "The Thorn Birds" with the book's author, Colleen McCullough?

It seems impossible, but all this and much more really did happen at the American Academy of Achievements Salute to Excellence week-end in Owensboro, Kentucky.

I admire the Academy greatly, and especially you, the Reynolds family, for giving students like me the opportunity to talk to successful people from all walks of life. I was interested, excited, and inspired by the stories of their lives. I am now much more confident that if I strive for personal excellence as they have done, I, too, can attain my goals.

Perhaps the most important thing I learned this week-end was that each of these highly successful people are just that- people. They showed me that each of us has the potential for greatness, if only we would pursue our goals with dedication, self-discipline, and drive. Now I, too, feel that someday, I will make it. Thank you!

Sincerely,

*Sheila Foran*

GAIL CASTEEL

"Miss FBLA"—Future Business Leaders of America  
Milford, Nebraska

SPONSOR: *Peter Kiewit*



July 3, 1978

Dear Mr. Reynolds:

The Banquet of the Golden Plate weekend is an experience I will remember and treasure for the rest of my life. Never before have I been surrounded by so many impressive people, both students and adults, and never will I be able to express my appreciation enough on being able to participate in "The Gathering of the Greats."

To me, it was truly an "enchanting" weekend. Olivia de Havilland's voice left me speechless; Colonel Wegener's modesty put me in awe. Questioning Stansfield Turner made my hands shake; eating Kentucky Fried Chicken with Colleen McCullough on the Green estate made my head spin. And to stand beside and actually shake hands with Judge John Sirica, a man I have worshipped from afar...well, it was a dream come true!

There are so many things that made the Academy weekend unforgettable: being honored as a USA Champion; sitting on a dais opposite such famous and successful individuals; receiving the Golden Eagle Award from a former Academy honoree; losing my voice the day before I gave my acceptance speech and surviving the rest of the weekend; and appearing on television during the Golden Plate Awards. But what impressed and touched me the most was the willingness, the enthusiasm, and, above all, the friendliness which all the honorees displayed to us students. That is what I will never forget.

Mr. Reynolds, thank you for one of the greatest experiences a young student could have. I only wish every young person could have shared in this fantastic weekend. I'd give the world to live it all again!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "Gail Casteel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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**I Achieve  
You Achieve  
He Achieves**

[illegible][illegible]

Among adult superachievers of the Kentucky conference were, clockwise from above left, CIA Director Wendell Turner, General Omar Bradley, jockey Steve Cauthen, actor Ed Butler and actress Cloris Leachman.

**GREENSBURG DAILY NEWS**  
*Southeastern Indians's Foremost Newspaper*

[illegible]

Shall of elements. The author's name alone in the Harvard book does not mean that he is the only person who has been involved in the project. "I was there," says "Karl" (Karl F. Korte, a California scientist who came to America after fleeing the Nazis), "but I was not involved in the concentration camp." This is not true, but the author has been told that the audience he has been talking to has been told that he was not involved in the concentration camp. "I was there," says "Karl" (Karl F. Korte, a California scientist who came to America after fleeing the Nazis), "but I was not involved in the concentration camp." This is not true, but the author has been told that the audience he has been talking to has been told that he was not involved in the concentration camp.

his academy from Vienna, Va., said he introduced the annual event to be the "most fantastic extraordinary opportunity of the students' lives." For Pat Schmitt and three other young Sig. Areas interviewed by The Chronicle, it was at least an unforgettable experience.

All four students said they did not know what a

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# GRE

85th Year —

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# Experience

by NANCY HELLMICHER

...were "stare" from every aspect of life at the "Salute to the Sea" weekend. Jim MacBrewster, a local student who

**SPRINGFIELD DAILY NEWS**  
*Southeastern Indiana's Foremost Newspaper*  
Wednesday, June 29, 1978 Greensburg, Ind.

**At Golden Plates Banquet**



Sanborn, Ke., Sat., June 24, 1979



...and, of course, the *Handbook of Adolescent Issues* built on the Team Group's

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McCaughy who is attending another workshop this year. The speakers at the conference, Medtrow said, included the following: Tom Laundry, head of the newspaper, who explained how he had become suc-

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